

Never Fired Before, Panther Raiders Say

By Deborah Rankin
Associated Press

CHICAGO, Jan. 13 — Two policemen who participated in a raid in which two Black Panther leaders were slain said today they had never fired guns in the line of duty before the Dec. 4 mission.

Sgt. Daniel R. Groth and Patrolman Lynwood Harris testified at a coroner's inquest into the fatal shooting of the two men.

Fred Hampton, 21, Illinois leader of the Black Panther Party, and Mark Clark, 22, a Peoria organizer for the Panthers, were killed.

Response to Question

In response to a question by a juror, Groth said he had never fired a weapon before in the line of duty during his 13 years with the Chicago police force. He said he fired two shots in the mission and believes he hit a woman occupant of the apartment.

Harris told Deputy Coroner Martin S. Gerber he had never fired a weapon during an assignment in his 14 years on the force. He did not say whether he fired any during the raid.

Groth, who is white, led 13 other Chicago policemen detailed to the Cook County (Chicago) state's attorney's office in the raid. Five of the officers, including Harris, are black.

Harris testified he was stationed outside the two-story apartment building on the West Side and helped to transport some of the illegal weapons allegedly confiscated to a special police truck.

Speculation on Escape

Harris said he did not see anyone leave the building through a gangway on the side. There has been speculation that an unknown Panther member escaped the raid through an air vent.

Groth, concluding five days on the witness stand, was questioned by Dr. James Hicks, a physician and foreman of the jury, as to whether police weapons used in the raid were later tested ballistically.

Groth said no such tests were made.

"Then, we don't know and could not say that any of the

bullets from police weapons hit the deceased?" Dr. Hicks said.

"I don't know," Groth replied.

Recording Heard

The jurors also heard a tape recording confiscated at the apartment that allegedly con-

tained instructions from a Panther leader to party members to resist with force policemen attempting to serve warrants.

On Monday, Groth testified that police crime laboratory tests indicated some medical supplies seized in the apartment were illegal drugs.